



V.J. ST. PIERRE, JR.
PARISH PRESIDENT

SCOTT P. WHECHEL
DIRECTOR

ST. CHARLES PARISH

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

P.O. BOX 302 • HAHNVILLE, LOUISIANA 70057

(985) 783-5050 • Fax: (985) 783-6375

Website: www.stcharlesparish-la.gov

TO: V.J. St. Pierre Jr., PARISH PRESIDENT

FROM: Ronald J. Perry, DIRECTOR *RJP*
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
& EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

SUBJECT: 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness continued to progress in 2012. At the beginning of the year we set our priorities on exercising, facilities and equipment and planning. Moving forward with those objectives, ultimately we were able to accomplish many things.

Exercising emergency plans and procedures is a critical element of our past successes and in planning for future events. Hosting and participating in the Statewide Disaster Response Exercise was a large undertaking, but was accomplished rather successfully. This is the largest hurricane response exercise that is held in the state and includes all hurricane response agencies on the state level, the Louisiana National Guard as well as some local jurisdictions. This allowed several St. Charles Parish Departments to directly interface with state agencies and vice versa to become familiar with each other's operations. Other natural hazard-related exercises that were held were the parish hurricane exercise and a second full-scale exercise was held specifically for testing capabilities in operating Points of Distribution. In the field of Homeland Security we participated in a regional Improvised Explosive Device Exercise with Galata Chemical and also an Active Shooter Exercise with Shell Motiva. Note that all of these exercises require preplanning, active participation and post exercise reviews.

This past year we were able to break ground and complete a large portion of the construction for a new Emergency Operations Center. This building will provide the parish with 13,000 square feet of space to mitigate emergencies in the parish, and will provide a much needed facilities upgrade for the 24-hour operations the department maintains.

Smaller equipment upgrades include the utilization of a new VOIP telephone system. This replaces the previous equipment that was no longer functioning due to hardware capabilities. Also, we were able to update the AED's throughout the courthouse and ensure their operation in the case that one is ever needed.

Planning projects that were accomplished this past year include Day Care Emergency Plans and CRI Planning. In an effort to assist the daycare agencies in the parish with the emergency planning requirements the state imposes upon their facilities we contacted all of these facilities and offered to assist them with their planning efforts. For those that were interested we were able to provide to them a summary of the hazards that have a potential affect on their business and a guideline of what the parish has to offer them during times of emergency. In the future we would like to do comprehensive planning for all hazards with these sites and hope that they will participate. Also, in planning we were able to plan for and meet all of the criteria required for the Cities Readiness Initiative. This criterion requires the parish to create and maintain plans specifically for responding to pandemic incidents. This program was created in 2009 and we have met all requirements since its inception.

The parish was faced with only one large scale response this past year: Hurricane Isaac - a Category 1 Hurricane - that affected the entire parish on August 30th. Although this storm was not nearly as intense as storms that we have faced in the past, the slow speed of the storm caused storm surge to reach heights on the west bank higher than ever before seen. Overall it was a good year with the Emergency Operations Center only reaching the Alert Emergency Classification Level eight (8) times.

As we move into 2013 we are excited about the prospect of moving into the new Emergency Operations Center coupled with a new communications tower. We will once again set goals for our department to continue to be a model for others, and do all that we can to prepare for and to respond to events that can harm life or property in St. Charles Parish.